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The —MASTER— FISHERMAN

ERNEST EARLE OSGOOD

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The Old Art Club, Richmond.

The Master Fisherman

BY

Ernest Earle Osgood

1921

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Dedication

DO YOU REMEMBER THE OLD ART CLUB OF RICHMOND AND WHAT DELIGHTFUL TIMES WE USED TO HAVE THERE TOGETHER? I WOULD LIKE TO DEDICATE THE FOLLOWING LINES IN GRATITUDE TO ITS MEMORY.

The Author

Foreword

THE bond between religion and poetry is immemorial. Hardly had language been invented, anthropology tells us, before it was put to rhythmic uses; and these earliest rhythms were not only employed in, but directly born of, the celebrations and festivals of worship. When we first catch sight of man, dimly emerging from the prehistoric mist, the adorational song is firmly established among his scanty possessions. To our modern sense, indeed, those primitive dithyrambs might suggest little of either religion or poetry; yet they were both, and they stand to prove, as I should suppose, an intuitive recognition of a relation between the two forms of ideal beauty — a relation so close in some directions as to become, in truth, a partial identity. However, lest that stretches a doubtful "little learning" too far, we may at least view this ancient bond as the inescapable tie between matter and manner, the instinctive fulfillment of meaning in form. The coarsest cement does for a street to walk upon, but the

sculptor turns naturally to marble; and beautiful thought will tend to find a beautiful expression, as water seeks its own level. Since religious feeling is the most idealistic of the longings of men, and — with love, with which again it has so close a connection — the most deeply charged with emotion, it has inevitably and persistently flowered in poetry, the most passionate and beautiful of literary forms.

I think the records of our own religion, like the history of poetry, fully support these simple reflections. It would not indeed do to say that no man has a great faculty for God without being in some degree a poet; yet the union of gifts is frequent. In the oldest literature that is familiar to most of our readers, the Old Testament, lyrical passages of great beauty abound. The Book of Psalms, which will come first to everyone's mind, is the true forerunner of the hymn-book; and Psalms is a volume of poems in precisely the contemporary sense. There was a time, I remember, when this thought was a little disconcerting to me; having learned to think of the Psalms purely and unimaginatively as "religion," as the Bible, I was as a boy slightly disturbed to hear them spoken of as

"poetry," which seemed somehow to make them at once secular and fabulous. The point of view has no merit for me now. I rejoice in the fine recurring phrase, "the *beauty* of holiness," where the pure theologian would have been concerned only with rectitude or duty; and it is clear that David's genius for adoration has only been enriched, vastly enriched for us as well as for himself, by his great power of song. And the Psalmist, of course, has but linked himself with a mighty tradition — intuitive, literary and religious at once — which even then had long been lucidly defined and which after him was to have many holy exemplars, including one more illustrious than David. While the pure lyrical form is unsuited to the teacher, assuredly it is by no chance that the Master Fisherman, scattering his sayings freely to all who stayed to listen, left to literature many passages which are of the true essence of poetry. Having a lovely teaching, he gave it a form of surpassing loveliness. The fact seems to me significant and, for our present purposes, profound. Masses of people, I take it, are not stirred by the cold abstractions of truth, however personal to their lives and dreams, and the incalculable

dominion that the Founder of our religion has exercised in the kingdom of the heart, while temporal empires have risen and fallen, has surely been due in some part to the moving beauty of his recorded sayings. Christ was himself the first Christian poet; and here, too, he has had many followers among the faithful.

To this immemorial tradition, and to the great body of Christian song, the little volume before us joins itself in the simplest fashion. Embarking upon the "lyric Galilee" — to borrow his own apt phrase — the new singer exhibits, first and foremost, a winning absence of all pretentiousness. His opening lines are in themselves an express disclaimer; and this modesty — not the universal characteristic of poets, perhaps — is here a continuing note, genuine and deep, and carrying its own charm. It is the same temper, too, which discloses itself in the general simplicity of design and material: though this indeed is a simplicity which is conscious of itself, which allows full scope of vigor and beauty of expression and which is, in a word, of the sort that so often marks authentic poesy. Thus, in the title poem, "The Master Fisherman," we find this natural unpretentious-

ness shot through with true passion, resulting in singing lines of pure simplicity —

> Master, dost thou go fishing with me
> Out on the waters of Galilee —

Or take a verse such as this, from the Epilogue, where music is wrought from the commonest and most familiar words:

> The cattle on a thousand hills,
> The gold within the mine,
> The pearl hid in the ocean's depth,
> All, all, O Lord, are thine.

Examples could be multiplied, for the note, as I say, is characteristic. At the same time this is no harp with but a single string; and the poet has, in fact, succeeded in covering, in a small compass, a quite considerable range. Relatively few in number as are the verses collected here, we find them running in mood and thesis from the lightness of "Practical Advice to a Friend" to the controlled intensity of "Un Homme Qu'est Il!" — from the quiet reflectiveness of "Prophet and Priest" to the narrative idealism of "Gottlieb;" from the evangelical exhortation of "The Seventy" to the self-searching cry of "The Soul's Catechism" —

Have you walked with God by the seashore?
Have you walked with Him in the grove?
Have you walked with Him through the vale of tears
And the transfigured mount of His love?

And this welcome variety of mood, it should be said, is amply carried out and objectified in the varied metrification here exhibited. Far from clinging to the simple quatrain or couplet, the singer has touched "the stops of various quills." In the lines from the proposed drama, "Julian the Apostate," he has successfully experimented with the stately and sonorous cadence; in "A Hymn" — one of the best poems in the book in my opinion — he has used a short-line rhymed form, involving many difficulties, with much effectiveness; in "Un Homme" again he has called upon a rapid free-verse permitting him to rise easily to a ringing climax —

"These dead, these dead shall not have died in vain.
They are not dead!
These, these are they that live, were dead,
And now, behold, they are alive
Forevermore! Amen!

However, the reader, in making the acquaintance of these songs and hymns for himself, will

soon discover that Mr. Osgood, whatever his subject or his lyrical form, seldom strays from the essential source of his inspiration, which lies, as I have said, firmly embedded in the great orthodox tradition. He may strike his harp to many a note, but the note of doubt, of pessimism or negation, is never among them. With the light of an unwavering faith, with a vision big enough to consider the cosmos ("that ocean of Spirit that encircles the systems about"), with a particularity which yet can draw a lesson from the morning-glory and the cornstalk, with vigor and clarity and with a genuine devotional ecstasy, the poet has voiced afresh the common longings of the mighty Christian family. Nor can it be doubted that songs so felt and sung will always have a power over the hearts of the sons of men.

HENRY SYDNOR HARRISON.

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Aspiration

I LOVE the heights I cannot reach,
I love the truth I cannot preach,
I love the song I cannot sing,
I love the joy I cannot bring.

For heights some foot persistent reached,
For truth some prophet-soul has preached,
For notes some minstrel-heart has raised
And joy revealed, O God be praised!

Heights glacial though I may not scale,
Dwelling within life's shadowed vale,
Drinking from low-descending brook,
Yet to the heights I still will look!

Compensation

FROM early youth the poet sang
Until his white-haired age.
His song was but the rhythmed truth,
Which breathed through every page.

Full cheerily he sang at noon,
At eve and brightening morn;
He sang amid the motley crowd
Of joyous and forlorn.

Yet no one stopped to grasp his hand
Or praise his lyric lays.
Men quarreled still and women wept
And children plied their plays.

Heart-sore with grief, the poet died
And sought the heavenly throng.
But when he reached the streets of gold,
An angel sang his song.

Todes - Braut

THE day was ending. Shone the sun's last rays
On pictured tapestries and gilded walls.
Amid the radiant splendor, like a flower
In luxury's rich soil, a fair young woman sat
Upon a throne, wearing a crown bright-jeweled.
Broad were the lands o'er which her golden wand
Of royalty extended.

Softly came
A youth of noble brow and gracious mien
And knelt before her throne.

"Oh, who art thou?"
The young queen asked, as out to him she stretched
Her sceptre, touching which he rose and answered,
"Over empires vastlier great than thine I rule.
Far in the Shadow-land they lie, and, lo,
My subjects number more by far than all

The peoples of this earthly sphere. And now,
Fair child, say, Wilt thou be my queen?''

His words,
So magnet-like, drew her pure soul to his,
And from her heart's deep depths she answered, ''I
Am thine.''

''To-morrow, then, at sunset hour
I will return to make thee mine for aye,''
He said, and vanished on the wings of night.

Then through her capital the queen sent forth
Her heralds, to proclaim a festal for
The morrow at the royal palace-halls.
Half-hour ere sunset glow came nobles, knights
And ladies fair unto the bridal feast.
And when the queen entered her stately halls
Led by young children, who encarpeted
Her feet with lilies white, the throng exclaimed,
''She is the fairest lily of them all!''
And when she climbed her flower-decked throne, all bowed
The knee and cried, ''O may thy life bloom in
The garden of Eternity!''

But when
The sun began to gild the western gates,
A muffled stillness came o'er all, and the pale
Queen's soul rose trembling, waiting for its lord
To come.

Still as the all-haloing sunset beams,
Coming no man knew whence, the king approached,
Ensplendored with his royal wedding robes.
And when the throng beheld his godlike form,
Then saw the fair pale waiting queen, bethought
Each heart, "To-day true Nobleness doth wed
Fair Beauty's self!"

In accents soft he said,
"I claim thee, Queen, for bride. Fate shall our priest
Be, and Eternity our palace-halls."
Her lips, soft as the petals of the tenderest flower,
Unto his own he drew. But oh! his lips
Were icy cold. He vanished from their view.
The Queen fell lifeless on the floor, and then
O'er all descended dark sepulchral silence.
Her soul forth with its lord had gone; for, lo,
She was the Bride of—DEATH!

Un Homme Qu'est Il?

"'What is a man?' a common soldier asked her one day on the beach." From "You No Longer Count," by Réne Boylesve.

I

WHAT is a man?
—These myriad wounded hands,
These countless mangled bodies,
These limbless stumps—
What is a man?

What is a man?
—These shock-wrecked sensitive nerves,
These gas-shelled writhing forms,
These desecrated human shrines—
What is a man?

What is a man?
-- Torn from his home at country's call,
Thrust to the front at Duty's stern command,
And there

One microscopic victim in Earth's mighty
hecatomb—
What is a man?

II

What is a man?
Like untombed Lazarus,
These limbless ones,—called back to life,—
Rearmed, shall till again the war-ploughed fields
of France
And make hell's desert blossom as the rose.

What is a man?
These shell-shocked hosts,
With nerves restrung and minds revisionéd,
Backward again shall hurl the tyrant hordes,
Again send forth Freedom's unvanquished cry,
"They shall not pass!"

What is a man?
Enriched by sacrificial blood,
Freedom's fair flower brightly shall bloom again,
And in the face of Earth's each new-born babe,
Taking large breaths in Liberty's pure air,
The heroic features of the martyred dead
Shall gleam with resurrected and engloried life.

What is a man?
The earth made new by these,
Freedom world-throned,
Creative Peace restored,
These dead, these dead shall not have died in vain.
They are not dead!
These, these are they that live, were dead,
And now, behold, they are alive
Forevermore! Amen!

My Heart and Thine

MY heart and thine
Doth Love entwine
With cords no man can break.
My love for thee,
Thy love for me
Hell's power nor earth's can shake.

Though far from me,
I am with thee
In angel-faith's repose.
Love spans all time,
And finds each clime
Where the Belovéd goes.

Thy trust in me
And mine in thee
Becalms Life's stressfulness.
Love heals each pain,
Gives bliss again.
Earth's joys! can Heaven's be less?

One Rainy Day

A RAINY day! a useless day!
Black clouds hide heaven's blue,
And whelm my heart in depthless gloom.
Ah me! what shall I do?

There is an ancient sepulchre,
Removed from haunts of care;
Old books, chairs, pictures here abound.
I'll climb the attic stair!

Lo, like a battlemented wall,
Tall tiers of many a tome
Frown down on my unarmored heart;
From gloom to gloom I come.

I seat me in a broken chair
Of ancient carvéd grace,
And from the volumes' dusty backs
The names I slowly trace.

Old Baxter's "Saints," Law's "Serious Call,"
And Edwards' thundering word,

Burton's Black Bile's "Anatomy"
  Shafts for my heart afford.

Yet one old parchment back I spy,
  Whose titled gilt doth part
Its clouds of ancient dust, and shines
  Upon my rain-beat heart.

Upon this solemn wall of tomes
  I make a sudden breach,
While for Old England's Sacred Songs
  All-eagerly I reach.

Here in this lyric Galilee
  I sink my net and strive
Some strengthening food for me to find
  And keep my soul alive.

Lo, from these depths of rhythmic praise
  What soulful wealth I drew—
So rich I feared my net would break,
  Shared not my neighbor, too.

Of lands where Peace smile-crownéd sits,
  Where roses aye endure,
Where One who never changes reigns—
  "Thy God, thy life, thy cure,"

I read, and then of Praise to God
'Mid fertile fields and bare,
For blessings rich, and joys withheld,
If God's love still was there.

I read of Stoic's chainless soul
"With courage to endure,"
How God's own purpose ripens fast,
"Unfolding every hour."

I found again the cosmic peace
'Neath wormwood and the gall—
Heaven-centred faith, O Lord, that "if
I slip, Thou dost not fall."

Then down to earth I came again,
Armed for life's battle-fray,
Thankful for Hope's hid waiting words
I found that rainy day.

Practical Advice to a Friend on Lending a Book

O'ER the book you lent
Days and nights I spent
With interest ever enhancing.
And I laughed and wept,
My heart stopped and leapt
At episodes so entrancing.

On its style and strength
You discoursed at length
With such extravagant rages!
But next book, my friend,
Ere you recommend,
Remember to cut the pages.

Complaint of a Would-be Poet

(*Respectfully dedicated to the Editor's Waste-basket.*)

O EDITOR, Editor,
Cruel, steel-hearted man of affairs!
I have sent to you my duly rhymed and rhymthed outpourings,
And you have sent them back with that black, funereal, crépy message,
"Thanks, but untimely, unavailable."

Yes, the crépe you hung upon my heart's fervent effusions
Was black, cold, hopeless, dead.
When one dies to this world in these new days of earth,
The thoughtful undertaker covers the bell-button with a white fair-streaming ribbon,
So friends may know that, while within
Lies the dead,
Yet there flutters outward on heaven's breezes
The white-pure hope of Immortality,—the friend,
Dead here, lives yonder there.

Or else, palm leaves are hung at the front door,
To show that though all's death and defeat here,
Victory and Life are beyond and above!

But you, unsensitive critic, send back
My murdered poetizings
Without one smallest ribbon of hope
Or one scant palm leaflet of potential triumph.
The poetic bark, launched upon seas of literary
adventure,
Is hurled back upon the shores of my expectant
heart—
A broken, a useless, a stranded thing—
And the monster storm-billows thunder their
cold notes diapasononic,
"Thanks, but untimely, unavailable!"

Prophet and Priest

WHAT is a prophet, say, and what a priest?
A prophet pioneers in virgin lands
Of truth. He knows God's Promised Land
Awaits his willing feet; he enters in,
Partakes its luscious fruit, a portion bears
To his impatient brethren, waiting there
On Jordan's farther marge. He sees the visions,
And reveals to those whose eyes see not and hearts
Are gross with earth.

The priest those truths receives
And of them makes a holy sacrament,
To feed the sinful, starving souls of men.

The Church Gates.

The Church Gates

O CROSSES, pointing ever to the sky,
To greet the hasting, thoughtless passerby!

To those with wordly pleasures onward driven,
Ye one brief moment point the path to heaven:

Prepare who pass between your outstretched
arms
To fervent join in prayers and hymns and
Psalms,

With thanks and praise God's earthly courts to
tread,
With reverent hearts to eat the Living Bread.

And thus, like rugged prophets of the soul,
Ye point men ever to the Heavenly Goal.

A Hymn

(Supposed to be sung by Christians on Good Friday, in a proposed drama to be entitled "Julian the Apostate.")

1

ON a tree
Though He be
Nailed and crucified,
In three days
God shall raise
Jesus glorified.

2

Soldiers jibe,
Priests deride,
"Temple-builder, Lord,
Leave Thy cross,
Come to us,
We'll believe Thy word."

3

Yet there fall
Over all
That confuséd din

Words sublime
All-divine,
"Father, heal their sin."

4

By His side
Crucified
Two thieves. One said thus:
"Art indeed
God's own breed?
Save Thyself and us!"

5

But one cries,
"This man dies
Pure and innocent.
Silence, thief!
We receive
Our just punishment."

6

Spake that one
To God's Son
Words all-pleadingly,
"When Thou'rt come
To Thy home,
Lord, remember me."

7

Then that thief
Sweet relief
Heard from lips divine,
"Lo, I say
That to-day
Paradise is thine!"

8

Standeth there
Mary fair,
Weeping for her child.
What a dart
Pierced thy heart,
Holy Mother mild!

9

To her cries
Christ replies
Oh! how tenderly!
"In loved John
See thy son;
John, thy mother see."

10

With what groans
—Suffering tones—

From the tree accurst,
Anguishing,
Languishing,
Hear Him cry, "I thirst"!

11

From our Lord
Then they heard
Sorrow's agony.
"God above,
King of love,
Why forsakest me?"

12

Cries God's Son,
"All is done!
Death is dead! My soul,
Father mine,
I resign
To Thy blest control."

13

Darkly fall
Over all
Piercing clouds of gloom,
Rent the veil,

And the pale
Dead rise from the Tomb.

14

On a tree
Though He be
Nailed and crucified,
In three days
God shall raise
Jesus glorified.

Lines for a Proposed Drama, to be entitled "Julian the Apostate"

(The following words are supposed to be spoken by Julian, on entering Constantinople as Emperor, at the death of his cousin, the Emperor Constantius, which occurred December 11th, A. D., 361.)

NO longer chained am I by modern creeds,
No longer forced to press the garment's hem
Of that rude Galilean Carpenter,—
That peasant God, who at His crimsoned cross
In bloated bombast bows the nations down.
What blasphemy!

Down Galilean Christ!
And up forevermore Olympian Zeus!
Lo, Saturn's golden age once more returns,
And reigns again Religion's ancient grace,
While 'mid the temple's pillared loveliness
Shall perfumed incense wafted be to heaven.
Once more shall altars reek with hecatombs,
Oblations rich again outpouréd be,
Devotion lift restrengthened hands to heaven,
And gods with men shall deign anew to dwell.

Once more the white-robed train shall offer up
Their virgin beauty to heaven's Virgin Queen.
The gentle dryads shall encastled be
In groves, and fair-limbed nymphs shall seek again
All-joyfully their watery palace-halls.
Eleusis' mystic rites shall be renewed,
And bacchanals shall dance in frenzied grace.
On Zion's hilltop shall the springs be dried,
While from Parnassus' heights shall rill again
The rhythmic harmonies of heavenly song.
Down Galilean! Up Olympian!

REFRAIN BY THE IMPERIAL TRAIN.

Down with the Staff of the Shepherd!
Up with the aegis of Zeus!
Falleth the cross of the Carpenter-God,
When Jove lets his thunderbolts loose!

(The following lines are supposed to be uttered by the Emperor Julian, after he received a mortal wound, in his Persian campaign, before the walls of Ctesiphon, June 26th, A. D., 363.)

Who is that white-robed Figure yonder there?
He beareth in His hand a shepherd's staff.
Nail-piercéd is that hand. Those wondrous looks
Of love condemn me more than sternest judge.

I, who would proudly bring the world again
To thunder-wielding Zeus, am hurled to hell
By that sweet-smiling face!

Thou hast triumphed,
O Thou lowly Nazarene!

(Throws dust into the air and falls dead.)

Maecenas

(*A Poem for Class Day, Bates College,* 1892.)

SCENE: Palace of Maecenas, Esquiline Hill, Rome,
TIME: 8 B. C.

MAECENAS:

My heart is chilled with gloom to-day. I would
Horatius from his Sabine Farm were here,
To melt this gloom with his own heart's fiery
glow.

(*Enter Slave*)

SLAVE:

My Lord, thy poet-friend, Horatius, stands
Without. And shall I bid him enter?

MAECENAS:

Yes!
'Tis a welcome hour that from his country villa
Sent him hither! Go, bid him enter, haste!
(*Exit Slave*

(*Enter Horace*)

MAECENAS:

Welcome, heart's friend! Methought that thou
wast out
Of Rome to-day.

HORACE:

And so I was this morn,
But business brought me hither at an early
hour.
Thou seemest sad, my patron-friend, to-day.
I would that I might drive thy gloom away.

MAECENAS:

Yes, Horace, I am sad. Lo, I have sought
Pleasure continually, yet have found none.
Long have I wandered by light-hearted brook-
lets,
By murmuring rivers, thundering water-falls,
Looked upon the jeweled stars above me,
Lingered 'mid the smiling flowers around me,
Sought the arena's bloody shows, the theatre's
charms,
And tried to drown my gloom in floods of wine.
My heart is like the heart of Psyche. Lo,
From shrine to shrine I pass, a comforting

Dear Love-god to behold, yet find him not.
Girt round with pleasures, still I have no joy.
Is Joy some distant palace, whose golden doors
Will never ope to me? 'Tis the sad thought
Grim death brings an eternal nothingness
That, like a chilling glacier, stiffly flows
Over my heart's fair flowers and kills them all.

HORACE:

Despair not, friend. O thou, who Atlas-like
Upheld'st the mighty Roman Empire with
Thy giant mind, hast nobler fate than this!
I once, as thou, was Epicurean,
Then Stoic, now am neither Stoic nor
An Epicure, but Stoic-Epicure.
I hate the hollow-hearted Stoic creed,
Which makes of life and beauty one great pyre
On which to burn the soul in agony,
Thinking the dross will sink to ashes, while
The pure will rise to heaven's court. Nor yet
Doth Epicurus soothe alone my soul;
For he calls life one great gay banquet-hall,
Nor lets the soul be solemn for a while.
Neither is good enough for man alone.
I'd take the best of both and blend in one.

MAECENAS:

Well dost thou say, O Horace. Thou dost have
Simplicity. For it I first began
To love thee. But these chilling pains that through
My limbs rush whisper, Death—the eagle grim—
Will soon swoop down and seize upon his prey.
Oh! What is Death? Say, is there a Beyond?
Oh that thy loving heart might go with me
Over death's briery road and lead me on
To an eternal home, and I, like thee,
Might hope in gods and immortality!

HORACE:

And oh that I might lead thee to that hope!
Trust in the gods to give thee peace.
We need heaven's spirit in our hearts to make
Earth's beauties luminous. Our souls, bereft
Of Deity, are like the spark, which soon
Doth lose its radiance when sundered from
The flame. But we, when joined to the Divine,
Help light the darkness of a sorrowing world.
Over the billowy seas of doubt I, too,
Have sailed, I heard the Sirens' luring voice

And would have been their victim, but, praise Jove!
I heard Orpheus' diviner music. Then
Their power was gone, and I was henceforth safe.

Maecenas, there is an Immortality!
Once when I stood on Mediterranean's shore,
Doubting if there be Immortality,
I saw a heron from the water rise
And higher soar till lost in distant sky.
Then cried my heart, "O bird, the soul's like thee!
It, too, shall rise out of earth's ocean blue
Into heaven's airy blue and be forever part
Of Deity!" The warlike Marius
'Mid Punic ashes longs for distant Rome.
And so our souls, unsatisfied, sit 'mid
Life's ruined battlements, yet ever long
To rise and mingle with the joys of heaven.

Thou say'st thou canst not trust in gods. Dost thou
Remember at Philippi, when the force
Of Brutus fled before Octavius' band,
How I fled, leaving e'en my shield behind?
So flees he shieldless from life's battle-ground

Who faith reposes not in gods above.
Barren were Egypt if the sacred Nile
Did not o'erflow its banks and raise its crops
To life. Barren the heart unless belief
In Deity flow o'er it, watering
The rootlets of its flowers and raising them
To beauty and to hope. To thee, my friend,
The gods such blessed comfort long to send.

MAECENAS:

Horace, I must, I will, I do believe thy words.
They heal my heart, deep wounded by the spear
Of doubt. Oh! when a child I trusted heaven.
Thy words that childlike faith to me have given.

HORACE:

Praised be the gods! And though that thou must leave
Me for a while my heart doth weep, yet in
Its teardrops gleams the light of joy; for I
Shall soon be by thy side again, and we
Shall walk together through the halls of heaven.
Like children to their mother, we shall be
Clasped to the bosom of Eternity!

Gottlieb — A Christmas Idyll

I

IT was Saturday night.
Fritz and Martha—old people—
Were returning from the valley hamlet to their cottage on the mountain side.
As the moon illumined the night about them,
Fritz saw in the distance something brightly glistening,
And heard a low sad moan.
"Let us go to it," said Fritz.
Hastening their steps,
They found a tender babe lying amid the white snow,
Alone, clad in robes right princely
And wearing a chain of gleaming gold around his neck.
"Whose child can he be?
He will freeze lying there, poor thing!
Martha, we must take him home with us.
And, if his parents be not found,
He shall be our son, humble though we be."

II

It was Christmas Day.
Fritz and Martha sat in Church,
And the Child cooed softly between them.
They were old people—very old.
God had never blessed them with a child.
But now,
As the sun shone through the pictured window of the Blessed Mother and her Child,
The priest read, "Unto us a son is given."
Fritz bowed his head, and Martha crossed herself.

III

Daily Fritz went to the mines and labored long and hard
To earn for himself and Martha and the Child,
Gottlieb—Gottes Liebe—God's Love—they called Him,
"Because," said Fritz, "It was God's love that gave Him to us."
In the cottage
Martha's rough hands spun soft garments for the Child,
And as her back bent over the hoe in the garden,
She would hear the Child's joyous voice in His play with other children.

Yet His was always clearer, sweeter than the rest.
The children loved Him—oh! so dearly!
Yet ever were they a bit afraid of Him.
One day in childish glee
They twined a garland of flowers and placed it on His head
And called Him "their little King."

IV

Fritz and Martha lived on — wondrously old.
Fritz could no longer go to the mines.
Yet every morning Gottlieb shouldered His pick
And went alone.
Silently all day long—
Away from the light and the fresh mountain breezes—
He delved, down deep in the mine.
But, though He toiled amid the darkness and the grime,
His garments were never soiled.
And when He came to the cottage at night,
His face was always radiant as the sun,
And His hands were white, like the snow
Which cradled Him that night when Fritz and Martha first found Him.

V

"Prepare ye for the King,
Who comes from His distant capital on a great mission!
Let everyone be ready to receive Him."
Thus proclaimed the herald in the hamlet below
And in each cottage on the mountain side.
Daily at early morn Gottlieb went to the mines,
But as He went, He whispered to Himself,
"Would I could see the King!"

VI

Brightly gleamed in the morning sun
The armored hosts of the King,
And proudly floated the bannered royal lions on the breeze.
His Majesty the King approached each cottage,
Entered, eagerly looked around,
Then, seemingly unsatisfied with His quest, passed on.
The royal procession wound down the mountain side
And halted before the mines.
Each laborer was bidden to pass before the King.
"And are these all?" His Majesty demanded.
"All—save one," was the reply—One

Who was toiling far down in the heart of the
earth,
Toiling alone patiently and ceaselessly
For those beloved at home.
"Him I must see," said the King.
Gottlieb was summoned and silently stood before
His Majesty.
"'Tis He!" exclaimed the King.
"Thou art My Son!"

The Soul's Catechism

HAVE you walked with God by the seashore?
Have you walked with Him in the grove?
Have you walked with Him through the vale of tears
And the transfigured mount of His love?

Soul of mine! Eternity's image!
Child beloved of the Infinite Good!
Know you not that His spirit lives in you
And above you His love-soul doth brood?

His spirit thrills yonder frail grass blade,
He lives in the delicate fern,
He haloes the brow of the Christ-Child,
While for Him the soul prodigal yearns.

Soul of mine! be at one with the All-Soul.
Never dare let the sandbars of doubt
Cut thee off from that ocean of Spirit
That encircles the systems about.

Lines Written on the Fifty-Sixth Anniversary of the Consecration of Emmanuel Church

I

SIX years and fifty now have passed
Since from the aisle of yon church fair
The Bishop and the surpliced priests
Ascended to the altar stair.

Upon the listeners' eager ears,
In rhythmic alternations fell
The Psalmist's words, "The earth is God's,
The world and all that therein dwell."

The congregation, choir and priests
Joined in triumphant glad acclaim,
That God had movéd generous hearts
To rear this temple to His name.

How earth reached heaven by mystic rounds,
Perchance one lesson taught that day,
And one how men mount up to God
Through Christ, "the new and living way."

Emmanuel Church, Brook Hill, Va.

Through fervent prayers and hymns of praise,
  Christ's body's and blood's Sacrament,
Near to God's Throne the people drew,
  Thankful, devout and penitent.

The Bishop's blessing given, the throng
  Unto their homes forthwith repair,
Thankful this holy place was theirs
  For worship, praise, alms-giving, prayer .

II

Hid 'midst the trees from thoughtless gaze,
  Church of the living God,
More than a cycle's half, its aisles
  Sinners and saints have trod.

Here with the font's baptismal vows
  The priest Christ's lambs has sealed,
And at the chancel-rail those vows
  By them have been fulfilled.

Before the altar youth and maid
  Have pledged their wedded love;
Here sorrowing hearts have looked anew
  In hope to heaven above.

Anointed prophets here have preached
God's Holy Word and true,
And children here their duties learn
To God and neighbor, too.

O sacred shrine, Emmanuel!
God with us ever be!
That we Christ's soldiers e'er may prove,
And serve Him faithfully.

Thy graceful spire amid the trees
To heaven points constantly,
Teaching us, too, our hearts to raise,
From sin and sorrow free.

Prologue and Epilogue to a Religious Pageant, entitled "The Modern Magi," written by the Author's Wife

PROLOGUE.

TIRED of their old philosophies,
Behold the nations blindly grope.
Oh! who will show to them the way
Of larger life, of ampler hope?

The nations bow with sorrow down,
Greed clashes with fierce Envy's scorn.
For ashes who will beauty give,
The oil of joy for those who mourn?

Persistent in their quest, press on
The nations hungering in the night.
Who'll feed them with the Bread of Life?
Who'll lead them upward to the Light?

The old Commands on Olivet,
"Preach, Teach, Baptize," to us descend,
The ancient Promise still is ours,
"I'm with you to the world's far end."

Then point men to the Lamb of God,
  And raise the all-sufficient Cross.
Give light for darkness, peace for strife,
  And righteous gold for sinful dross.

EPILOGUE.

The cattle on a thousand hills,
  The gold within the mine,
The pearl hid in the ocean's depths,—
  All, all, O Lord, are Thine.

Receiving freely, we would give
  Freely for those who plea;
For all things come of Thee, O Lord;
  Thine own we give to Thee.

O God, we think Thy thoughts with Thee,
  With Thee we labor, too.
We give with Thee, O Christ, who gav'st
  To make all things anew.

Thy poverty has made us rich,
  Our wealth to Thee we give.
Thou died'st for all the world, and we
  For all the world would live.

The Seventy

(The late Bishop McVickar, of Rhode Island, once remarked that he liked to think of the Seventy, appointed by Jesus, not as little priestlings, but as consecrated laymen sent forth to do their Master's bidding. The following lines are dedicated to the Episcopal Church laymen of Richmond, who have been actively engaged in serving pastorless congregations in the surrounding country.)

OF old the Seventy at their Lord's command
In towns and hamlets went throughout the land,
The sick to heal, the dead to life restore,
The lepers cleanse, and preach the Heavenly Lore,
Assured Christ soon would be at their right hand.

Again Christ sends His Seventy two and two
Through town and village where Himself would go.
Say, hast thou heard His call? What hast thou done?
Of His bold ready Seventy art thou one?
As God hath sent Him would He send thee so!

Go forth, my brother, with divine decrees,
Fulfil thy mission, and ere thou shalt cease,
Upon the heights of life's fair Galilee
The beauteous feet of Him, hasting, thou'lt see
That brings Good Tidings and that heralds
Peace!

Strength and Beauty

IN prideful strength a stalk of corn
Arose to greet the brightening morn.

A morning glory raised her head
"Pray, let me lean on you!" she said.

"No!" said the corn, "a useless flower
Shall not usurp my glorious power."

Replied the flower, "If by your side
I grow, your power is not denied.

Lend of your strength to me a bit,
My beauty shall enhalo it."

And so in stable beauty grew
Corn-stalk and Morning Glory, too.

A poet passed that way and said,
"Behold how Strength and Beauty wed!"

Environment

I PLUCKED a white-fair lily
From a plot where rank weeds grew.
A friend asked, "Why take a flower
Where ugly weeds grow, too?"

I said, "Though rank and ugly be
The weeds the plot may fill,
Not for the weeds I pluck;
The flower is God's own still."

The Master - Fisherman

MASTER, dost Thou go fishing with me
Out on the waters of Galilee?

Fishing to me is sport right dear,—
Sweeter by far, if Thou art near.

Thou who didst toil with the carpenters' crew,
Dost Thou delight in fisher-folk, too?

All night long I've toiled and sweat
Without one fish for my hungry net.

Nevertheless, at Thy command,
Out will I launch my boat from land,

And in the deep I'll anchor my craft,
And let down my net for the promised draught.

Breaketh my net with this wonderful haul!
Brother-fishermen must I call.

Oh! what a foolish fisherman I,
Thinking I'd fail when Thou wast nigh!

O Master-Fisherman, sailing with me
Over the waters of Galilee,

Thou who dost fish with such baited ken,
Give me Thy net! I'll fish for men!

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